

6. (ONCE AMENDED) A method for generating a 3D model of a printed circuit board which mounts a component on a printed board, and performing with a three-dimensional CAD system a mounting design which includes a cabinet, the method comprising the operations of:

converting the printed circuit board into one or more models based on attributes preliminarily added to the component, by disassembling the printed circuit board, according to the attributes, into one or more constitutional elements to be converted into the models.

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action mailed October 18, 2002 the Examiner indicated that claims 1-10 are pending in the application. The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 6 while objecting to claims 2-5 and 7-10. An RCE, a Petition for a two-month extension of time and this Preliminary Amendment are being filed herewith. By the Preliminary Amendment, claims 1 and 6 have been amended. Thus claims 1-10 remain pending in the application. The Examiner's rejection is traversed below.

The Rejection

On page 2 of the Office Action the Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 6 as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,644,687 to Agonafer.

In the response to the prior Office Action the applicants had urged that Agonafer does not convert a printed circuit board into one or more models based on attributes preliminarily added to the component. On pages 3 and 4 of the current Office Action the Examiner has responded to the applicants prior patentability arguments. The Examiner has taken the position that the term "'converting' can suggest more than converting per se, even though the reference uses the term to describe the functioning that is being performed. A broadest reasonable interpretation of the claimed subject matter suggests to one of ordinary skill in the art that the functioning is merely to convert or transform or otherwise manipulate data describing a PCB into one or more models."